

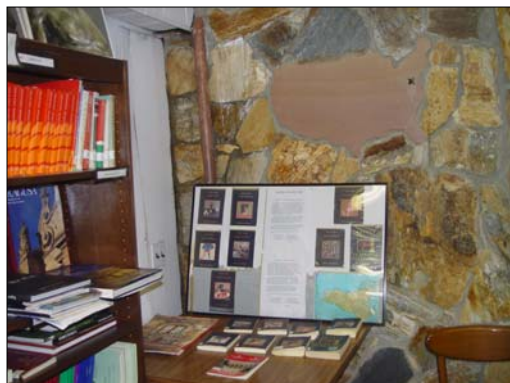


# THE NEW JERSEY ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION



## Community Outreach Regional Convocation

*Commitment, hospitality, tradition* – these three qualities were evident throughout the regional convocation hosted on May 5, 2006, by the **San Giuseppe Santa Croce Camerina Society** in Hawthorne in conjunction with the Community Outreach arm of the NJ Commission on Italian and Italian American Heritage. More than 200 guests from the Santa Croce Society and numerous other Italian and Italian American organizations gathered to hear how the Commission's projects relate to them.



**Part of the library at the San Giuseppe Santa Croce facilities**

As if inviting us into their home, President Mario Ferraro and Commissioner Carmelo Corallo welcomed us with generous hospitality. We were greeted with a Sicilian banquet of delicious homemade specialties including testa di Turchi, insalata di arance, arancini, gelato di nociolla, and torta di canolli.

Frank Gargione, co-chair of the Community Advisory Council, presented an overview of the Commission's purpose, structure and programs. Dr. Eileen L. Poiani, Council co-chair, spoke of the three convocations and two congresses that brought together hundreds of leaders to showcase educational initiatives and outreach activities. Dr. Gilda Rorro Baldassari, chair of the Curriculum Committee, explained the curriculum project



*Dr. Eileen L. Poiani, Mario Marano, Mauro Checchio, Gilda Rorro Baldassari, Frank Gargione, Carmelo Corrado, Tina Segali.*



*Cav. Joseph Coccia and friends arrive at San Giuseppe for the Convocation.*

that seeks to infuse modules on the Italian language and culture into the elementary and secondary curriculum.

The Commission's Community Outreach Relations Committee was honored by the attendance of notable guests such as Father Clement Cardillo, Cav. Joseph Coccia of the Coccia



*President of San Giuseppe Santa Croce Camerina Mario Ferraro and a member of the Santa Croce Society.*

Institute, Congressman William Pascrell, Assemblyman Paul Girgenti, and Ciro Poppitti of the Delaware Commission on Italian Culture and Heritage.



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### Chairman's Message

The last several months have been consumed with the numerous activities reported in this newsletter: planning for next year and dealing with the issues arising from the transition to a new team of administrators. Dr. Bob Freda, the original Executive Director of the Commission in 2002, was re-appointed as interim Executive Director to manage the affairs of the Commission and to direct the search for and train the replacement staff.

The new staff, Maria Cancro, assistant to the Institute, and Louise Hyland, assistant to the Commission, have done commendably well in the short time they have been employed. Their mission is to coordinate programs and activities, and re-establish good communications with the Commissioners and the Italian American Heritage Foundation.



Commission Chairman Cav.  
N. Larry Paragano

Effective July 2006, Carla Guerriero J.D. will become the Executive Director. A graduate of Drew University and the Pratt Institute, Carla received her Juris Doctor in 2000 from Seton Hall Law School. Her Italian language skills, teaching experience and work as a certified librarian, combined with her strong commitment to the promotion of Italian and Italian American heritage education, make her well suited for her new duties.

### Commission Upcoming Events

- **July 19, 2006**  
**3:30 – 5:30**

Meeting of the Commission.  
Room 209, State House,  
Trenton.

- **September 23, 2006**  
**6:30 -9:00 p.m.**

Reception with special guest  
The Honorable Samuel A.  
Alito, Jr., Associate Justice,  
United States Supreme Court.  
Drumthwacket, Princeton.  
Tickets are limited.

- **October 28, 2006**  
*Third Annual Congress of  
Italian American  
Organizations*

Rutgers University,  
New Brunswick  
To register your organization,  
call 732.932.0670 or email  
[lhylan@iahi.rutgers.edu](mailto:lhylan@iahi.rutgers.edu).

## Third NJ Congress of Italian American Organizations

On Saturday, October 28, the Commission will host the 3<sup>rd</sup> NJ Congress of Italian American organizations at Rutgers University in New Brunswick. Titled "New Jersey's Italian Americans – Preserving our Heritage Through Education," this convention will bring together many of the numerous Italian American organizations in NJ to discuss, coordinate and exchange ideas regarding the promotion of the Italian heritage. This annual event is attended by many of the state's Italian American leaders,

including business leaders, educators, legislators and consuls from Italy. Students, professionals, and anyone with ties to Italy are welcome to attend. Congress participants will be able to take part in panels and break-out sessions on a number of topics such as the support of Italian language and cultural programs and the enhancement of commercial and educational exchanges with Italy. Over 700 people are expected to attend.



Attendees at the 2005 Congress included Cav.  
Joseph Coccia, John Scarpati, and Ralph  
Contini.



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## Italian Heritage Education for All

The Commission's Italian and Italian American curriculum program is now available to all students and to all school districts in New Jersey.

Are the students in your school district receiving the program?

Since early in 2004 the curriculum project has been developed, field tested and independently evaluated in cooperation with the NJ Department of Education. Twenty schools across the state have participated and plans are underway to provide access for schools in other states.

The twenty-nine lesson plans, which are increasing in number each year, were the creation of a curriculum committee made up of teachers and curriculum specialists. Their main focus is to inform and educate students, teachers and community groups



*Dr. Brady leading the group in an exercise demonstrating a lesson plan on Da Vinci's use of stream-of-consciousness writing. Teachers (students) are asked to write for five minutes without stopping or lifting the pen from the paper, using the Mona Lisa & the five senses as a guide.*

## Foundation Info

The NJ Italian American Heritage Foundation supports the operations of the Commission. The Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees, which meets periodically to evaluate operations, coordinate strategies and ensure that the goals and objectives of the Foundation are aligned with its mission, vision and guiding principles.

Officers of the Foundation are Peter J. Cocozziello, President; N. Larry Paragano, Vice President; and Salvatore Davino, Treasurer.



*Dr. Gilda Rorro Baldassari addressing the group, with Bob Freda and Dr. John Dougherty of the DOE at the table to her right, and Dr. Diane Kubinsky of the DOE to her left*

regarding the positive and universal impact for more than two thousand years that Italians and Italian Americans have had in all fields of human endeavor.

The curriculum guidelines are copywritten as "The Universality of Italian Heritage" and are the first of their kind in the state and nation. Prepared for each grade level and destined to be available in all subject areas, the lesson plans enrich the teaching of literature, history, reading and writing skills, the performing arts and other areas that are required by the NJ Department of Education's Core curriculum content standards. To learn more about the content of the curriculum and how your schools can have this program at no cost, visit the Commission website at [www.njitalia.nj.gov](http://www.njitalia.nj.gov) and select the curriculum tab.

Trustees of the Foundation are: Frank Diassi, Donald DiFrancesco, Dr. Robert Freda, Justice Maria Garibaldi, Angelo Genova, Esq., Lucia Di Napoli Gibbons, Angelo Morresi, Esq., Greg Niccolai, Thomas Pecora, Dr. John Petillo, Walter Ricciardi, Victor Richel, Dr. Anthony Sartor, Tina Segali, Lois Van Deusen, Frank Vecchione, Esq., and Ted Zangari, Esq.

To make a secure online donation to the Foundation, visit our website at [www.italiannewjersey.com](http://www.italiannewjersey.com).

## FREDA'S COLUMN



### By Dr. Robert Freda

Executive Director of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission

Many have heard it said how the rich varieties of Italian food are so different from each other and yet each is delicious in its own way. That comparison applies to the Italian people as well.

So why talk about just Italian food, when we can refer to Italian art, architecture, music, science, fashion, and so many other aspects of this universally appealing culture? The answer is simple and practical: Italians are as varied and complicated as are their regional foods.

When we think about the creativity that goes into great cooking, it really doesn't matter what ingredients are used and available. Rather it is the creativity, verve, attention and care that are required to maintain the table, a symbolic center of the family structure, as beckoning as possible to those who are to be fed.

The next time someone asks "What are Italians like, or what distinguishes them from other ethnic groups, other cultures?", I say *variety*.

Regardless of their socioeconomic or regional backgrounds, just consider what one's Italian ancestors from any of the twenty-one different regions of Italy may have eaten in the past and even today. Compare this earthy homemade food to the cuisine of the high end Italian restaurants found worldwide and one has an equivalent definition of variety as it applies to those who ask, "What are Italians like?"



## THE NEW JERSEY ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

### Progetto Amicizia



Leo Pignat, Vice Consul of Italy in Newark Paolo Toschi, Gilda Rorro Baldassari, Consul General of Italy in New York Antonio Bandini, Mary Marano, and Mario Marano celebrate the Festa della Repubblica at the Museo dell'Emigrazione Italian (Casa Colombo) in Jersey City.

During a recent trip to Italy, Commissioner Mario A. Marano was able to observe firsthand how well Progetto Amicizia has been received by Sicilian students. Progetto Amicizia is a project initiated by Commissioner Gilda Rorro Baldassari where students of NJ schools

correspond with their Italian counterparts. It was started several years ago with exchanges between our students and those of Naro, province of Agrigento, Sicily.

In Canicatti, Commissioner Marano met with our project representative in Sicily, Prof. Giovanni Tese, Esq., as well as the faculties and students of two schools: Liceo Classico e Scientifico and Istituto Tecnico Commerciale e per Geometri "Galileo Galilei." He also met with Prof. Cataldo Salerno, president of KORE University, and the university staff in Enna.

Spreading the word on the project and the work of the commission, Mr. Marano met with Kiwanis clubs in Zafferana Etnea (Catania), the principal and faculty members of the Scuola Media in Viterbo (Lazio region), and the mayor of Castiglione del Lago.

The New Jersey Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies, located at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, is the operational body of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission for program implementation and administration. The Commission, located in, but not of, the New Jersey Department of Education, was created pursuant to the enactment of P.L. 2001, Chapter 343 C.18A4-42 and signed into law in January 2002. The Institute, a 501.c.3. entity with statewide jurisdiction, is charged with providing services to the public at large, as well as public, non-profit and other public service institutions in all twenty-one counties in New Jersey.

**NJ Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies**  
**Scott Hall, Room 223**  
**43 College Avenue**  
**New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901**

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